(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

MSP for Copra

1045. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the MSP for Copra has been fixed at Rs. 3300 and Rs. 3555 per quintal, for milling and ball Copra, respectively;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken note of the low productivity-rate and the high cost of cultivation, before fixing the MSP;

(c) whether Government have received any requests from the State Governments for raising the MSP; and

(d) if so, the details of the request received and the action taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Based on the recommendation of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), views of the State Government and concerned Central Ministries, as well as other relevant factors, the Government has fixed the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Milling and ball Copra of Fair Average Quality (FAQ) at Rs. 3300 and Rs. 3550 per quintal respectively for 2002 season. While recommending the MSP for Copra, the CACP has taken into consideration, *inter alia,* the low productivity and cost of cultivation of Copra.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Government has received a request from the Government of Kerala suggesting that the MSP of milling Copra be fixed at Rs. 4600 per quintal and that of ball Copra at Rs. 4800 per quintal for 2002 season. The request has been considered by the CACP while making price recommendation for 2002 season.

Cultivation on rain-fed land

†1046. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN': Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cultivation on most of the rain-fed land proves to be unremunerative;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government have made any assessment regarding the financial gains accruing from cultivation on such land; and

†Orignal notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) if so, the per hectare of profits by cultivation on such land?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) There is no study, which demonstrates that cultivation on most of the rain-fed lands is unremunerative. Rain-fed agriculture is dependent on Monsoon, which varies from year to year. In a year of deficient rainfall crop yields and farmers' incomes are adversely affected.

(b) Government of India has accorded high priority to improve production and productivity of rain-fed agricultural land through watershed development approach. Since 1991, the National Watershed Development Project for Rain-fed Areas (NWDPRA) is implemented in 28 States and two Union Territories.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Impact evaluation studies have been conducted in 109 watersheds assessing the impact of the above NWDPRA Scheme. The findings of the studies indicate that in the treated rain-fed areas, there is increase in ground-water recharge, increase in cropping intensity, enhancement in crop yield, change in cropping pattern towards higher value crops and increase in farmer's income.

Students in ICAR Agricultural Universities

1047. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the agricultural universities under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) had admitted about 100 foreign students during the last year;

(b) whether ICAR has set up a target for increasing admissions of foreign students into its deemed universities by five times, over the next year;

(c) if so, what steps are being taken in this regard; and

(d) how many foreign students are studying in ICAR's deemed universities this year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. Efforts are underway to increase admission for foreign students.

(c) (i) Preparation and distribution of brochures giving details for different courses, eligibility, location and procedure to different Embassies in India and Indian Embassies and Commissions abroad.

(ii) Orientation programmes with different Embassies in India.